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SOVIET UNION

1. New pattern in top leadership emerging in USSR:

The new pattern of government and party shifts in at least two Soviet Republics suggests that the top position is no longer the First Party Secretaryship as it was under Stalin. The Georgian and Azerbaijan Party Buros, which correspond to the All-Union Party Presidium, now list as the first or most important member the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

This pattern is particularly clear in Azerbaijan where M. D. Bagirov, appointed Chairman of the Republic's Council of Ministers, was released at his own request as the Republic's First Party Secretary, but retained his top listing--out of alphabetical order--on the Buro. Bagirov, who had been First Secretary in Azerbaijan since 1933, is unquestionably the top figure in the Azerbaijan hierarchy and following Stalin's death was elected an alternate on the All-Union Presidium, the new name for the old Politburo.

He was the only addition to that body in March, when it was cut from 25 members and 11 alternates to 10 members and 4 alternates. The appointment of a regional Party Secretary at that time was contrary to the pattern of the reduction, in which five of the six members who were local Secretaries were dropped.

His present shift out of the Secretariat to head the government while retaining the number one position on the Republic's Party Buro exactly parallels Malenkov's shift on the All-Union level, and suggests that Malenkov's request for release from the Secretaryship may not have reflected a loss in power.

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2. Diplomats in Moscow differ on nature of Soviet reply to Eisenhower:

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Ambassador Bohlen reports a difference of opinion among diplomats in Moscow on the possible Soviet reaction to President Eisenhower's foreign policy speech on 16 April.

Some diplomats consider that the Kremlin may prefer to remain silent to avoid taking a definite position at this time; that to attack the speech and reject the implied challenge would be in direct contradiction to the recent relatively temperate official statements. On the other hand, to welcome it might commit the USSR to courses of action on which it has not yet made up its mind.

Others argue that silence would strike a serious blow at the Soviet peace campaign, and would in effect be tantamount to a rejection.

Bohlen suggests that some form of official reaction will be forthcoming, possibly not immediately, either through a communication to the United States or an inspired editorial.

Comment: Distribution of the address at the diplomatic level almost demands an official reply from the Kremlin. An early reply would in all probability be motivated primarily by propaganda considerations.

Factors favoring a delayed response might include: the need for time to develop a well-coordinated line, and to consider effective countermeasures; a desire to avoid giving advance warning of Moscow's stand before the trend of the NATO conference becomes apparent; and an intention to use the Korean negotiations as a means of dissipating the effectiveness of the American initiative.

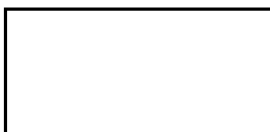
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FAR EAST

4. Peiping slogans for May Day ignore Malenkov and honor Mao:

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The 55 slogans issued by Peiping for use on May Day 1953 in China do not mention Soviet Premier Malenkov. The place of honor on the list last year went to Stalin, described as "great leader of the working people of the world." This year it goes to Mao Tse-tung, "great leader of the Chinese people."

Comment: Peiping has followed the Soviet line since Stalin's death in emphasizing the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party rather than that of any individual. It has also demonstrated its belief that Mao's personal prestige is greater than that of any living Soviet leader.

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6. Burmese Army chief orders slowdown on attacks against Chinese Nationalists:

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The Burmese Army commander, General Ne Win, on 21 April ordered commanders in north Burma to proceed with caution in further attacks against the Chinese Nationalists, [redacted] Ne Win

was said to believe that an early cease-fire and evacuation of the Nationalists was possible.

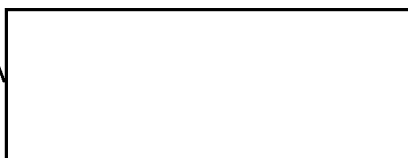
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Comment: This is the first indication that the Burmese Government may have curtailed its operations against the Chinese Nationalists.

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

7. Tudeh strength in Iranian armed forces estimated at 1,600:

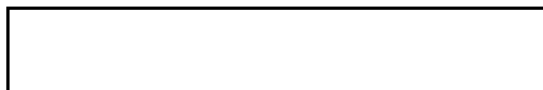
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A commission of high-ranking Iranian Army officers appointed to examine Tudeh strength in the armed forces estimated a total Tudeh

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membership of 900 in the army, 300 in the air force, and 200 each in the Military College and Military High School.

The commission concluded that the Tudeh hopes to become well entrenched in the armed forces within five years, and recommended that known Tudeh members be court-martialed and publicly stripped of their military insignia.

Comment: While the percentage of Tudeh membership in the services is less than one percent, the fact that approximately 20 percent of the two military schools are members indicates Tudeh's emphasis on long-range planning to influence the army.

A successful purge of Tudeh members in the armed forces would depend on government support.

8. Iranian note issue increased over 40 percent:

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Iranian Minister of Court Ala recently told

that the note issue has been increased by about \$98,000,000, more than 40 percent above the authorized level.

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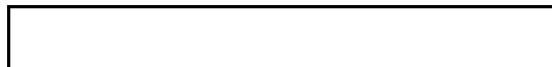
Comment: Last September Prime Minister Mossadeq secretly authorized a 20-percent increase in the note issue. The subsequent expansion indicates the magnitude of Iran's present financial crisis and suggests that this may continue to be the only way in which Mossadeq can meet essential government obligations.

9. Comment on rumored Iraqi expansionism:

With the approach of the coronations on 2 May of two members of the Hashemite family, King Feisal of Iraq and King Husein of Jordan, reports indicate a growing Middle East

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belief that Iraq is planning some move toward realization of the traditional ambition of the Hashemites--union of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and the former Palestine.

Syrian dictator Shishakli has reported an Iraqi conspiracy with former Syrian army officers to turn Syria into an Iraqi-ruled state. Press reports from Syria and Jordan speak of a federation between Iraq and Jordan to be consummated shortly after the coronations.

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None of these reports has been established as valid. They reflect Iraqi enthusiasm for Arab unity, however, as well as non-Iraqi suspicion of the Hashemites. The Hashemites and Iraqi elder statesman Nuri Said have worked since 1920 for union of these states; they may consider the forthcoming celebrations an auspicious occasion to attempt it.

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WESTERN EUROPE

10. East Germans act to meet "very serious" food situation:

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In view of the "very serious" food situation in East Germany, the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party reportedly decided on 14 April to reduce the number of ration cards by 1,200,000 and to ask the USSR for a respite in food reparations deliveries, direct assistance, and permission to draw on strategic food reserves.

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Comment: Meat, fats, sugar and potatoes have been in short supply throughout the winter and food reserves were drawn on in January to meet critical shortages. The tight food situation is expected to continue through the spring.

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